The exports of rice would depend upon International demand and supply position, international and domestic prices, consumer preferences, and varieties traded. Low international demand and better crop production in rice consuming countries has led to the shrinking of Indian rice exports during 1999-2000.

(c) Some of the steps taken to enhance exports of rice include conducting publicity campaigns, sending delegations abroad, participating in International trade fairs, inviting potential buyers and providing financial assistance to exporters for improving quality, packaging, brand promotion of products and for conducting market surveys.

Central investment in industrial sector in Assam

2445. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to increase the Central investment in industrial sector in the State of Assam during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefore; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) to (d) Two development schemes, i.e. Growth Centres and Transport Subsidy are already being implemented with the objective of promoting industrial growth. In the 9th Plan, three new schemes have also been introduced for development of the North Eastern States viz. the Capital Investment Subsidy scheme, Central Interest Subsidy Scheme and the Comprehensive Insurance Scheme. These schemes have been notified but are yet to become operational.

The details of fund release made to the Assam during 9th Plan is given in the statement enclosed. (*see* below)

STATEMENT

Fund releases made to the State of Assam during the 9th Plan (1997-98—2001—2002)

(Rs. in lakhs)

Scheme	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
1. *Growth Centre*			
(i) Chariduar	—	—	150.00
(ii) Matia	50.00	—	100.00
2. *Transport Subsidy*	2548.61	1250.54	1195.24

Centrally sponsored scheme for backward areas

†2446. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Centrally sponsored scheme was implemented for the development of backward areas during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the assistance received by Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh through this scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) to (b) Yes Sir, with a view to promote industrialisation of backward areas in an effective manner, a Growth Centre Scheme was announced in June, 1988 by the Government of India under which 71 Growth Centres would be developed throughout the country which would be endowned with basis infrastructural facilities to attract industries. The contribution of Government of India would be Rs. 10 crore per growth centre (Rs. 15 crore in the case of North Eastern States) by way of equity and the remaining funds would be arranged by the State Governments. This scheme was implemented in the Eighth Five Year Plan and is ongoing in the Ninth Five Year Plan. 68 growth centres have been approved so far and Rs. 298.71 crore have been released as central assistance under the scheme.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.